

CLAIMS

1. System for providing an input signal, comprising an element (M,1) controllable by a user by means of interaction with a user's limb, which system comprises a sensor (5,6) capable of detecting the presence of a limb placed on or over at least part of the element (M,1), timing means (2) for determining the length of time during which the limb is present and means (11,9,7,8) for generating an alarm signal if said length of time exceeds a threshold value.
2. System according to claim 1, comprising means (7,8,9) of providing a tactile signal in response to the alarm signal, preferably to the limb placed over the element.
3. System according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the nature of the alarm signal changes if the presence of the limb continues to be detected after the alarm signal has initially been generated.
4. System according to any one of the preceding claims, comprising means (2,11) of generating an audible alarm signal or an alarm signal suitable for triggering the generation of an audible signal.
5. System according to any one of the preceding claims, capable of determining whether interaction takes place between the user-controllable element and the user's limb, wherein the system only generates the alarm signal if no substantial interaction takes place during the determined time interval.
6. System according to any one of the preceding claims, capable of recording the interaction occurring over a period of time.
7. System according to claim 6, capable of determining the nature of interaction and of comparing the determined nature with at least one risk-profile, wherein the system generates the alarm signal if the nature of the interaction conforms to the risk profile.
8. System according to any one of the preceding claims, capable of compiling and storing a record of the inter-

action between the user-controllable element and the user's limb and/or of the generation of alarm signals over a period of time.

5 9. System according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the sensor is comprised in the element.

10 10. Device for use in a system according to any one of claims 1-8, comprising means for detecting the presence of a user's limb, wherein the configuration of the device is adapted to allow the means for detecting the presence of a user's limb to detect the presence of a user's limb placed on or over at least part of the element, which device further comprises means for generating a signal representative of the detected presence, and means for communicating the signal representative of the detected presence to the timing means.

15 11. System for providing an input signal, comprising an element (M,1) controllable by a user by means of interaction with a user's limb, which system comprises means for detecting activity of the user's limb and means for generating an alarm signal if no user activity is detected after a period of user activity.

20 12. System according to claim 11, wherein the element comprises means for detecting user activity.

25 13. Device for use in a system according to claim 11, comprising means for detecting activity of the user's limb, wherein the configuration of the device is adapted to allow the means for detecting activity of the user's limb to detect the activity of a user's limb placed on or over at least part of the element, which device further comprises means for generating a signal representative of the detected activity, and means for communicating the signal representative of the detected activity to a controller configured to generate an alarm signal if no user activity is detected after a period of user activity.

30 14. Computer input device (M), e.g. a mouse, comprising a sensor (5,6) capable of detecting the presence of a user's hand placed over at least part of the device (M), timing means (2) for determining the length of a time interval during

which the presence of the limb is continuously detected and means (7,8,9,11) of generating an alarm signal if the time interval exceeds a threshold value.

15. Computer input device (M), e.g. a mouse, comprising means for detecting user activity means for generating an alarm signal if no user activity is detected after a period of user activity.